

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 24, 1863.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The *Hansa* from Bremen, viz. Southampton, on the 5th, arrived at New York on the 19th. Her news is not of much importance.

The National Government of Poland has agreed to a Conference of the Powers on the Polish Question, on condition of an armistice, and the admission into the Conference of her representative. Russia is awaiting the debate on the Polish Question in the British Parliament on the 10th, to shape her answer accordingly.—Lord Palmerston said that the Government had entered into no engagement binding her to join France in a war against Russia, should one arise on the Polish question.

The out-break in Greece, consequent upon the arrest of Lotzenko, has not yet been suppressed. The Bank of Athens was attacked by the insurgents. Fifty persons were killed and wounded. The marines from English, French, and Russian ships subsequently occupied the building.

President Lincoln has issued a proclamation fixing a day of thanksgiving for the recent Federal victories. This is probably to induce the people to believe that there have been some successes on the Federal side, by calling upon God to vouch for the fact. The statements of the authority of Washington in matters of this sort, have long since ceased to be regarded by the people as any evidence of facts.

It is difficult to see what the Federal Administration has to rejoice about. A feeble rumour was set afloat that Charleston has been taken; but it was false, of course. So far the Federals have the worst of it at that point; though the Confederates were surprised, and, after a severe contest, in which the gunboats withdrew, they lost a small battery six miles from the city, on Morris Island.

The fall of Fort Hudson followed that of Vicksburg, as a matter of course. It is difficult to believe that any intelligent men can really anticipate the important results which some journalists claim as likely to follow from these successes. The Mississippi will not be opened to navigation, for the Confederates who line its banks, will post guns here and there on the bluffs, and the lead steamboats of the West, would never make a return trip, should any of them return, even under the convey of gunboats, a few hundred miles below Memphis. Of course, without gunboats, such a thing could not be attempted, and commerce with a gunboat accompanying each steamer, will scarcely flourish in a way to justify exultation. The river is closed, and will be so, till the end of the war. The Confederates are cut in two, to be sure; but it has been so, ever since Fort Donelson fell, in the Spring of 1862. There is nothing so terribly disastrous in that. Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas get their supplies from Mexico. They fight on their own hook. Communication with the Richmond authorities is not a matter of very much importance towards the success of their operations. The Confederates lost some men in these places. But their loss is doubtless very much exaggerated. Lee's army is reported in fine spirits and condition. Meade, who was reported to be chasing Lee, was, of course, afraid to attack him. So much for the rout of General Lee.

The Riots in New York have been quelled for the present, by moral suasion, more than anything else. They will probably break out in a form to which the events of last week would be mere child's play, should the Government seriously attempt to enforce the draft. With the two-thirds of his actual subjects, in opposition to him, (for the copper heads in the Northern States, outnumber the friends of the administration two to one), and the war with his theoretical subjects of the revolted South in its present condition: with New York in front, and Richmond in the rear, King Abraham's seat is not a bed of roses: neither is it as trim, perhaps, as his best friends could desire. The civil war in America has only begun. We have not yet seen out the first act of the drama, though it seems to be drawing to a close. Who of us will live to see the Tragedy to an end! Evil principles have brought forth their evil fruit. If the Yankees can be turned to no other good use, let them, at least, be held up as a warning to the nations.

"Generally speaking property in Ireland is as secure as in any part of the Kingdom. In spite of these unhappy agrarian outrages, life is more secure in Ireland than in any part of the Kingdom, because it is well known that crimes of violence are much less frequent in Ireland in proportion to the population than they are in England."—*London Times*.

The above is an extract from a speech as reported in the *Times*, and delivered in the House of Commons by Lord Palmerston on Thursday, 23rd ult., on the occasion of Mr. Maguire's motion for a Royal Commission to enquire into the relations of Landlord and Tenant in Ireland.—Considering where, and by whom spoken, these words are valuable, indeed conclusive as to the respective morality of Romish Ireland and of Protestant England.

"Crimes of violence," so Lord Palmerston proclaims from his place in Parliament, "are much less frequent in Ireland, in proportion to the population, than they are in England." To what, we ask, does Ireland owe this comparative immunity from serious crime? To what cause must we assign the greater security of life that, according to Lord Palmerston's showing, obtain in Ireland, and honorably distinguishes it from all other parts of the Kingdom? Shall we attribute this immunity, this honorable distinction, to the ethnological, to the material, to the political, to the social or to religious causes? For cause there must be, and that cause must be looked for in something wherein Ireland differs from England, and other parts of the Kingdom.

We cannot attribute it to an ethnological cause, or to any natural and inherent moral superiority of the Celt over the Teuton. The latter is, we believe, naturally quite as tender of life, quite as scrupulous with respect to property, as is his Celtic cousin. It will not therefore be pretended by Anglo-Saxons, that it is because the Irish are Celts, that "life is more secure in Ireland than in any part of the Kingdom;" and that "crimes of violence are much less frequent in Ireland, in proportion to the population, than they are in England," whose population is mainly of Teuton origin.

Still more improbable is the hypothesis that the moral superiority of Ireland, and its comparative immunity from crimes of violence are due to any material advantages which Ireland at present enjoys with respect to England, and other parts of the Kingdom. For the last three years Ireland has been suffering from chronic famine, and its material conditions have been such as to naturally provoke men to violence, and to outrages of every description. It is therefore not because, but in spite of these material conditions that "life is more secure in Ireland than in any part of the Kingdom;" and that "crimes of violence are much more frequent in proportion to the population than they are in England"—whose material conditions, because more prosperous, are so much more conducive to peace, and respect for property.

If we look at the political conditions of Ireland, we shall find that these are eminently unfavorable to tranquility and good order. Ireland is politically disaffected—we will not pause to enquire why, or seek even to justify that disaffection. It is sufficient for our purpose to state the fact. England, on the contrary, has neither real nor imaginary political grievances to urge against its Government; and yet in spite of its unfavorable political conditions "life is more secure in Ireland than in any part of the Kingdom," and "crimes of violence are much less frequent in proportion to the population than they are in England."

Shall we assign a social origin to this extraordinary phenomenon? Are the social conditions of Ireland—the relations betwixt Landlord and Tenant, for instance—so vastly superior to those of England and other parts of the Kingdom as to afford a solution for the problem before us? We trow not. What with the standing insult of a Protestant Establishment for a Catholic people—what with alien and absentee landlords, notices to quit, wholesale evictions, and crowbar brigades, the social conditions of Ireland are, with the exception perhaps of that of Naples and of Poland, the most wretched of any in the known world; where, as in England and other parts of the Kingdom, the Established Church is the Church of the majority of the people, the relations betwixt Landlord and Tenant are most friendly, and mutually beneficial. Instead of the notices to quit, the screwing up of rents, the summary evictions, and the pulling down of their humble cottages, which are too often the only communications which pass betwixt tenants and their landlords in Ireland, the relations of owner and cultivator of the soil in England and Scotland are characterized by a mutual interchange of good offices. Their landlord and tenant are of the same race, and of the same faith; whilst in Ireland the owner of the land stands but too generally to the occupier and cultivator, in the position of an alien in blood, in language and religion. The social conditions then of England and other parts of the Kingdom are highly conducive to respect for life and property, but are in Ireland evidently most unfavorable; and yet in spite of these most unfavorable conditions,

Lord Palmerston assures us that "life is more secure in Ireland than in any part of the Kingdom," and that "crimes of violence are much less frequent in Ireland, in proportion to the population, than they are in England"—in prosperous, well governed and contented England.

For this fact, which coming to us upon such authority as that of Lord Palmerston cannot be contested, there must be some cause; that cause must be looked for in something wherein Ireland differs from England, and other parts of the Kingdom; and though there are great ethnological, material, political, and social differences betwixt Ireland and Great Britain, we think that a moment's reflection will suffice to show that to none of these, can the moral superiority of Ireland, over England and other parts of the Kingdom, be attributed. To what cause then shall we assign it? What other great difference is there betwixt the two countries whose operation we have not yet discussed?

One such difference there certainly is, and a most important difference too. Ireland differs from England and other parts of the Kingdom in that it is Catholic, or *Romish*, or *Popish*, as the *Peaser* pleases; whilst England and other parts of the Kingdom are essentially Protestant and anti Catholic. The former has the Sacraments and the Confessional, the other an "open bible;" and we do not say as the effect, but as one of the concomitants, of this striking religious difference we find that, in spite of its most unfortunate, and crime-provoking material, political, and social conditions, "life is more secure in Ireland than in any part of the Kingdom;" and that "crimes of violence are much less frequent in Ireland in proportion to the population than they are in England."

But, according to Protestantism, Catholicity is demoralising and the Confessional is the great encourager of crime. Be it so—but here then is a mystery which we would request Protestants to solve. How is it that the Romish Irish, who frequent the Confessional, are morally, so immeasurably the superiors of those to whom the "bible" is ever "open," and the Confessional ever closed?—how is it that, though in its material, political, social and religious conditions Ireland is so low, "life is more secure in Ireland than in any part of the Kingdom;" and "that crimes of violence are much less frequent in Ireland in proportion to the population, than they are in England," with its happy and most favorable conditions, material, political and social, and above all with its "open bible?" Here is a problem which will set all attempts at solution at defiance, if we start upon the task with the Definitions, Postulates, and Axioms of Protestantism.

And to increase the difficulty, the same phenomenon as that indicated by Lord Palmerston occurs in Canada, and is indicated by the Official Returns of the Provincial Penitentiary. These establish the fact that Romish Lower Canada, like Romish Ireland, is, in respect of morality, immeasurably the superior of its wealthier and Protestant neighbor—the criminality of the latter being more than double, and nearly three times, as great as that of the former. Here then are *data* which cannot be contested, which are well authenticated, and are therefore most unlike those *data* as to the criminality of Catholic European countries, with which enlightened Protestant journalists entertain their intelligent readers; and the problem which we propound to our Protestant contemporaries is this:—To reconcile these facts with their theory, that Popery as compared with Protestantism, is unfavorable to morality.

STATE OF PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.—

The Paris correspondent of the *New York Observer*, quoted by the *Toronto Christian Guardian*, gives some important details with respect to the present state and future prospects of Protestantism in France. If in these details there be nothing to excite our suspicions, nothing with which we were not previously acquainted, they are nevertheless valuable as the forced admissions of a Protestant, and therefore of one who is an unexceptional witness, against Protestantism.

The first symptom which our informant notices as characteristic of the diseased condition of French Protestantism, is its internal discord.—"I have spoken before," he writes, "of the divisions which have sprung up among the Protestants of our country. This state of things is becoming more and more serious." As we read these lines we are reminded of St. Paul's address to the carnal Corinthians, and of his strong and reiterated exhortations against "divisions" the existence of which he cited as a proof of their "carnality."—1. Cor. iii. 3.

Proceeding with his diagnosis, our informant indicates the extent which these "divisions" now reach. "The Protestants of France were divided some years ago; but their difference did not exceed a certain point." There were even then, Calvinists, with their eternal decrees of damnation; and there were Liberal Christians who "objected to the doctrine of the atonement and even spoke doubtfully of the divinity of Christ." But to-day the divisions extend much

beyond these points, and refer, not to any particular interpretation, but to the dogmatic authority of the Scriptures. The present position of the Protestant theologians of France is thus described:—

"The neologists of the present time believe no longer in any direct inspiration of the Bible. They consider the Gospel only as a logical progression of the human mind. Jesus Christ in their mind is a mere man,—Hebrew Socrates,—with less learning and more religion than the Grecian Plato. His miracles are not authentic, and nothing is supernatural. God, himself hardly preserves his personality in their theories, and pantheism shows itself here and there in mitigated forms. Such are our theologians at the present time!"

And these "neologists" form, not merely a portion of the Protestant laity, but constitute the bulk of the ministry. "What aggravates the state of things is that these same men hold the position of pastors, so that these doctrines are taught from the same pulpit from Sabbath to Sabbath which the orthodox occupy. Is not this confusion? And how, with such contradictory elements, establish one religious society, one Church?" Not an easy question to answer indeed, though the following present no great difficulties to the Catholic, or indeed to any one accustomed to read the signs of the times:—

"Where are we going then? and what will become of our glorious Reformed Church in France?"

That the "we" of the *New York Observer*, that the "glorious Reformed Church in France" are going to the devil as fast as a horse can gallop, is, we think, pretty clear by the writer's own showing; and their fate should be a warning to those who seek to extend that same "glorious Reformed Church" to Canada.

For when we reflect that the symptoms of approaching dissolution exhibited by the Protestant Church in France are in every respect identical with those which, as the most cursory examination must convince us, characterise the condition of the Protestant Church in England and in America, as well as in Germany and Italy, we cannot avoid the conclusion that these are but the symptoms of one and the same disease, and that that disease is inherent in, and inseparable from, the very constitution of Protestantism itself. Had it declared itself in Germany alone, or in France alone, it might have been argued that the disease was local, or the product of causes peculiar to climate, and not common to all Protestant communities. When however we see that, all over the globe, those communities are tainted with the same disease, that it presents, always and everywhere precisely, the same symptoms, that it runs its course in one well defined order, that it is not modified by climate, or by political conditions, and that the Catholic Church alone, is always and everywhere exempt from it, we must conclude that the disease is inherent in Protestantism itself, or rather one of the forms in which that system must always, sooner or later, manifest itself. It, in its first stage, denies or protests against the authority of the Church; in the next stage it protests against the authority of the book called the Bible; and in its last or fatal stage, it denies or protests against the supernatural altogether. From the first to the last of these stages the transition is easy, and to all who can reason logically, and who act consistently, is indeed inevitable.

"The proof of the pudding lies in the eating thereof," says the proverb; and so with the Catholic proposition that Protestantism leads naturally to the negation of Christianity. We appeal to facts, to the admissions of Protestant writers of all countries, and of all sects in proof of our thesis; and we cite the solemn words of warning, or rather the despairing cry, of our friend of the *New York Observer*. "Where are we going then? What will become of our glorious Reformed Church?"

ANTI CONSCRIPTION RIOTS AT NEW YORK.

—The partial conscription system imposed by Russia upon the Poles was the immediate or provoking cause of the Polish insurrection: the New York riots had their origin in the same cause—the attempt of an arbitrary government to destroy the personal liberties of the people, by an iniquitous Conscription Law.

In so far then, as the outbreak at New York was a protest against the unconstitutional action of the despots at Washington, it is as much entitled to our respect and sympathy as is the insurrection of the Poles. But unfortunately for the cause of freedom, the riots at New York from want apparently of leaders and requisite organization, degenerated into a *Jacquerie*, or tumultuous uprising of the poor against the rich. In its progress it was moreover signalized by acts of wanton barbarity against the unfortunate negroes, whose condition as freemen in the North is at the best of times, infinitely more degraded than that of their colored brethren held to compulsory labor in the South: and where with rare exceptions the negroes are kindly treated by their white masters. In this latter phase—the New York riots can excite only our indignation, and our regret that a good cause should be lost through the worthlessness of its avowed champions.

An organized resistance to the draft would indeed have challenged our respect. Heart and soul we could have sympathized with the insurgents, and we should have been by no means

disposed to criticise harshly any measures however extreme to which those opponents in their assertion of their personal liberties might have been compelled to have recourse. But when, instead of confining themselves to legitimate and praiseworthy object, the insurgents proceeded to deeds of brute violence against the helpless negroes—and by their acts showed that they were animated rather by a love of plunder than by zeal for liberty, the current of our sympathies, till then setting strongly in their favor was suddenly checked, and we could not but look upon their defeat as the just reward of their extreme folly and their dastardly cruelty. Their folly was as conspicuous as their cruelty was disgusting to every honest man. They had the game in their own hands, had they but known how to play it properly. By firm but temperate resistance to the iniquitous Conscription edict, they might have forced the despots at Washington to yield, and to bring the horrid war devastating this Continent to a close. Instead of this, we have had a series of low brutal unorganised riots which by their very excesses speedily wore themselves out, and effected nothing. Such is the inevitable result of desultory rioting.

Not only have these riots done nothing in the way of tempering the despotism beneath which the Northern States groan, but they have, we fear, strengthened the hands of the arbitrary and unconstitutional Government of Abe Lincoln. The holders of property, alarmed by the plundering propensities of the mob will now rally round that Government, not so much because they approve of its acts, and admire its policy, as because they see therein the only possible guarantee against anarchy and indiscriminate massacre; and the rioters themselves, like drunken men after a night's debauch, are no longer capable of offering any opposition to the efforts that will now be made to trample out any embers of the sacred fire of personal liberty that may yet be left unextinguished in the Northern States.

Deeply therefore do we deplore, not the resistance to the Conscription edicts, indeed, but the manner in which that resistance manifested itself. A great occasion for bringing the war to a close has been left unimproved; a golden opportunity, such as may never again arise, for arresting the growth of a military despotism on this Continent has been allowed to slip away; and, as is the case with all injudicious insurrections, the failure of the New-Yorkers cannot but establish more firmly than ever the yoke which Yankee Jacobins have imposed upon the people. The latter might have asserted the great principle of State Rights as against the centralised despotism of Washington; they did not do so; they took to pillaging and drinking and murdering—and verily they have got their reward.

Our friend who writes to us on the subject of the election at Ottawa, and the defeat of Mr. Scott, must not think that the non-appearance of his communication argues any want of sympathy on our part with the cause he advocates. The great length of the letter, and the minuteness of the details, alone prevent our inserting it: but we gladly avail ourselves of this occasion to say again that we think that Mr. Scott has been very badly dealt with by the Catholic electors, and that he has met with a sorry return for many years of faithful service to his Ottawa constituents in particular, and the Catholics of Upper Canada in general. To the latter it belongs to repair in some measure the injustice done to Mr. Scott, and this duty we hope they may soon have an opportunity of performing.

Mr. Scott's exertions to carry the Separate School Law through the Legislature have given him a strong claim upon the gratitude of every Catholic in the Province; and the non-recognition of this obligation thus imposed on them, by the Catholic voters of Ottawa, or rather by a section of those voters, is certainly not calculated to encourage others to exert themselves as Mr. Scott has exerted himself. For this reason then, we feel deeply the loss that our cause has sustained by his defeat; and we feel it not only to be a loss but a disgrace—as arguing our want of gratitude, and an indifference to honesty on the part of our representatives.

THE TWELFTH.—The anniversary of the conquest of Ireland by the Anglo-Dutch under the Prince of Orange was pretty generally celebrated in Upper Canada, and with the usual orgies, by the Orangemen, but fortunately there were no serious disturbances of the peace. From the *Toronto Globe* we learn that there was a row at some drinking den which was gutted by a lot of inebriate Orangemen, who had been loafing about the streets of the city in procession; but in other respects the day passed off quietly enough.

We beg to remind our readers that the Pic-Nic for the benefit of the St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum will take place on Wednesday next, in Victoria Gardens (late Guibault's). We hope that there will be a large attendance, as the object of the Pic-Nic is a praiseworthy one—to feed and clothe the Irish Catholic Orphans.